



Planning and Project Implementation Update



April 2004

ABOUT THIS UPDATE

The purpose of the Chippewa Quarterly is to provide a summary of environmental analyses on the Chippewa National Forest. Issued quarterly, this is intended to complement other public involvement efforts initiated by the Forest Supervisor or District Rangers. Legal notices will continue to be published in the following local newspapers: Bemidji's *The Pioneer* for Forest Supervisor decisions; and Blackduck's *American*, Cass Lake's *Times*, Deer River's *Western Itasca Review*, and Walker's *The Pilot-Independent* for District Ranger decisions.

Projects are classified into one of three categories:

Environmental Analyses in Progress

This category includes projects in which public input is being or is about to be solicited. It also includes those projects that are currently under study or analysis. Environmental analyses include Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), Environmental Assessments (EA), and Categorical Exclusions (CE).

Completed Decision Documents

These projects have culminated in the preparation of completed environmental analyses and decision documents since the last issue. These decision documents include Records of Decision (ROD), Decision Notices (DN), and Decision Memos (DM). Findings of No Significant Impacts will be included in this category, also.

Proposals withdrawn or deferred

Some projects are initiated and published in this Quarterly but may be withdrawn or deferred for various reasons. These projects may or may not be picked up for completion at a later date. Project summaries include reasons for discontinuing the project.

HOW YOU CAN BECOME INVOLVED

Read through the list of proposed projects. If you want to provide site-specific comments on a project, get more information, or be placed on the project mailing list, write or call the contact person listed for that project. We value your site-specific involvement. A generic statement of interest in all projects is not specific enough. It is only through site-specific input that we can be responsive to and incorporate your concerns into project development. *Project specific comments are required during the 30-day Notice and Comment period to obtain standing to appeal a project. New Appeal Regulations went into effect on June 4, 2003.*

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Appeal Period - The 45-day period after publication of a decision in which an appeal can be filed.

Categorical Exclusion (CE) - A category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. Neither an environmental assessment nor an environmental impact statement is required.

Comment Period - The time allowed for interested persons to provide comments to a Responsible Official on a proposed action.

Decision Memo (DM) - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision to implement an action that has been categorically excluded from documentation.

Decision Notice (DN) - A concise written record of the responsible official's decision based on an environmental assessment and a finding of no significant impact.

Environmental Assessment (EA) - A document that presents issues and concerns important to a project, alternate means of accomplishing a project, and environmental effects of each of those alternatives.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) - This document is required for proposed actions that may have significant effects on the human environment. The contents are similar to an environmental assessment, and it includes some additional sections.

Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) - A document prepared by a federal agency presenting the reasons why an action, not otherwise excluded, will not have a significant effect on the human environment and for which an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The procedural guide for the decision making process for site-specific projects.

Proposed Action - A proposal made by the Forest Service to authorize, recommend, or implement an action on National Forest System lands to meet a specific purpose and need which is subject to public notice comment provisions.

Scoping - Includes internal and public involvement to determine the range of issues to be addressed. Scoping aids in the development of alternatives for a proposed action.

Significance - As used in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires consideration of both context and intensity.

Anticipated "Walk-in" Business

Requests from the public occasionally necessitate analyses be completed with a short turn-around. This may mean that decisions are made without prior announcement in this Update. As these projects come up for consideration however, they will continue to be announced by legal notices in newspapers. Examples of walk-in requests include special use roads and utility rights-of-way. Scoping efforts for these requests will be conducted as applicable.

Forest Policy on Distributing Documents

Draft and Final Environmental Assessments and Decision Notices/FONSI's and Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements and Records of Decision are routinely mailed to individuals who submit written comments to any projects. We do not routinely distribute biological assessments or biological evaluations with the previously listed documents. If you wish to receive biological evaluations or biological assessments for NEPA projects, please contact the district and/or Supervisor's Office NEPA Coordinators.

Privacy on Comments Received

Comments received in response to solicitation as part of the NEPA process, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on a proposed action and will be available for public inspection. Comments submitted anonymously will be accepted and considered; however, those who submit anonymous comments will not have standing to appeal the subsequent decision under 36 CFR Parts 215 or 217. Additionally, pursuant to 7 CFR 1.27(d), any person may request the agency to withhold a submission from the public record by showing how the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) permits such confidentiality. Persons requesting such confidentiality should be aware that, under the FOIA, confidentiality may be granted in only very limited circumstances, such as to protect trade secrets. The Forest Service will inform the requester of the agency's decision regarding the request for confidentiality, and where the request is denied, the agency will return the submission and notify the requester that the comments may be resubmitted with or without name and address within stated number of days.

SCHEDULE OF NEPA PROPOSED ACTIONS

Blackduck Ranger District
417 Forestry Drive
Blackduck, MN 56630
(218) 835-4291 TTY: (218) 835-4189

TRACY BECK, District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Leo Johnson (ljohnson@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analyses in Progress

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
B110	County Road 22 Reconstruction & Easement	T148N,R31W	Reconstruct and pave the county road	Scoping completed	Analysis in Progress	April, 2004	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B120	Bridge Replacement	Mitt Lake Creek T150N R27 W Sec 21 Wagner Creek T149N R28W Sec. 12 Crane Creek T147N R29W Sec. 1 Swamp Creek T148N R30W Sec. 32	Replace bridge.	Scoping done April 2003	Analysis in progress.	Spring, 2004	Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672
B131	Scenic Highway Reconstruction (County Roads 10 and 39)	T149N, R30W T148N, R30W T147N, R30W T146N, R30W	Reconstruct the road with wider lanes, wider shoulders, gentler ditch slopes, wider clearings, and gentler curves.	Scoping done December 2003	Analysis beginning	August, 2004	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B122	Sugarbush Township Road Easement	T147N, R31W	Easements for existing township roads.	Begin July 2004	Begin Summer 2004	December, 2004	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B123	Olson Road	T146N, R31W, Sec. 4	Access to private land - existing road.	Begin Spring 2004	Begin Spring 2004	June 2004	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B124	Ardenhurst Township Road Easements	T150N, R28W	Issue easements to the township for township roads crossing NFS lands in Ardenhurst Township.	Scoping done November 2003	Analysis in Progress	May 2004	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B127	Stream Habitat Improvement (Third River)	T147N, R28W	Underplant conifers on islands in Third River flowage and associated TSI. Possible coop. with DNR.	Begin Summer 2004	Summer 2004	Summer 2004	Jeff Allison (218) 835-4291
B129	Dunbar Lake Access	T148N, R28W, Sec. 9	Road reconstruction and construction of a small parking lot. Coop. project with DNR.	Begin Summer 2004	Summer, 2004	October, 2004	Jeff Allison (218) 835-4291
B130	Stream Bank Stabilization and Aesthetics (Popple River)	Various	Planting conifers and shrubs along streambanks to stabilize the soil, restore stream morphology, and minimize beaver impacts. Planting along FR 2231 for wetland protection and aesthetics.	Begin Summer 2004	To begin in August, 2004	November, 2004	Jeff Allison (218) 835-4291
B132	Norway Beach Recreation Improvements	T145N R30W Section 8, 17	Additions and improvements to sidewalks, showers, etc.	April, 2004	May, 2004	May, 2004	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B133	Beltrami Electric Underground Lines - Chinaman	T148N R30W Sections 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, and 16	Moving existing underground electric line from within the roads to the within the ditches.	May, 2004	June, 2004	July, 2004	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B134	Beltrami Electric Underground Lines - Sugarbush	T147N R31W Section 22	Installing a new electrical underground tie line in the ditch along FR 2177.	May, 2004	June, 2004	July, 2004	Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116
B135	C-16 St. 14 Thinning	T145N R29W Sect. 5	Thinning up to 70 acres of dense red pine under Healthy Forest Initiative.	Begin April, 2004	Summer, 2004	September, 2004	Lisa Arbucci (218) 835-3117

Completed Decision Documents

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
B119	Rambling Woods Resource Management	T146N,R29,30,31W, T147N,R29,30,31W T148N,R30,31W T149N,R30,31W	Timber Sale, Vegetation Treatments, Prescribed Burning, Roads, Watershed; Minor Recreation Projects.	Decision Notice Signed April 1, 2004	Legal notice published April 4, 2004.	July 2004	Leo Johnson (218) 835-3107
B125	Fish Cribs in North and South Twin Lakes	T148N, R31W, Sec. 34/35	Refurbishing brush in existing fish habitat locations Included in Rambling Woods EA and DN.				
B111	Bowstring River Bridge Replacement	T149N,R27W, Sec. 23 and 26	Easement (about 400 feet by 66 feet) and replace a narrow bridge	DM signed 1/26/2004	Not appealable		Chuck Wingard (218) 835-3116

Analyses Deferred for the Present

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
B126	Fisheries Habitat Improvement	T147N, R28W, Sec. 4	Tree drops along lakeshore	December, 2003	To begin in January, 2004	March, 2004	Jeff Allison (218) 835-4291

Supervisors Office
200 Ash Avenue NW
Cass Lake, MN 56633
(218) 335-8600

Environmental Analyses in Progress

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
	Reservoir Operating Plan Evaluation (ROPE) Study	Upper Mississippi River between Bemidji and St. Paul	Focus is the operation of Federal dams in the study area: however, coordination with the operators of the non-Federal dams will be included as part of the study. Army Core of Engineers is leading the effort. Forest Service is cooperating. EIS signed by both agencies is anticipated.	Summer 2004	Begin in summer	2006 or 2007	Nancy Salminen 218-335-8666

Walker Ranger District
201 Minnesota Ave. East
Walker, MN 56484
(218) 547-1044 Fax: (218) 547-3260

THOMAS G. SOMRAK, District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Chris Brunner (cbrunner@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analyses in Progress

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
W70	Re-issuance of Various Lands Special Use Permits	District-wide	Evaluate the renewal of special use permits near expiration. Permits are valid for five years.	February	Ongoing	May 2004	Jim Tande (218) 547-1044
W71	Leech Lake River Resource Management	T142-T145N R26-28W	Timber harvest, prescribed burning, planting, and road decommissioning	Completed	30-day comment period to begin end of April 2004	June 2004	Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044
W73	Pipeline Maintenance	Numerous spots along pipeline that crosses Walker district.	Maintenance of pipeline and corridor. Digs to inspect pipeline that are necessary to ensure spills/leaks do not occur.	Completed	Completed	May 2004	Cathy Thompson (218) 335-8655
W74	Bridge Replacement	Laura Lake Creek T141N R 27W Sec. 25	Replacement of bridge	Completed	In progress	Spring 2004	Bill Yourd (218) 335-8672
W75	FR 2862 Reconstruction and Easement	T141N R28W Sec. 7	Applicant has requested a special use permit for a portion of FR 2862 to access private land	March 2004	In progress	May 2004	Jim Tande (218) 547-1044
W76	Gadbold Lake Access	T141N R31W Sec. 27	Applicant has requested a special use permit to reconstruct ½ mile of FR 3767A and construct 1000 feet of new road on NFS lands.	February 2004	In progress	August 2004	Jim Tande (218) 547-1044
W79	Conifer Thin	District -wide	Commercial thinning in conifer stands.	March 2004	In progress	July 2004	Sharon Klinkhammer (218) 335-8660
W77	Cass County Land Exchange	T141N R26W Sec. 9-11, 13	Cass County has initiated a land exchange proposal for 160 acres.	May 2004	Not begun	August 2004	Christine Brunner (218) 547-1044

Note—In the future the NEPA Quarterly will look different. The Forest Service is developing a national database to track key planning information that automatically generates the Report. We anticipate using it for the July2004 and all subsequent editions.

Deer River/Marcell Ranger District
1037 Division Street
Deer River, MN 56636
(218) 246-2123 TTY: (218) 246-9743

Marcell Office
49554 State Hwy 38
Marcell, MN 56657
(218) 832-3161

WADE SPANG, District Ranger
NEPA Coordinator: Michael Jiménez (mjimenez@fs.fed.us)

Environmental Analysis in Progress

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Scoping Status	Analysis Status	Expected Decision Date	Contact Person
D52	Merle Garage – Little Cut Foot	T147N R26W Sec 36	Request Construction a Recreation Residenc	Initiated March 2003	Analysis in Progress	June 2004	Jane Munnell 218-246-2123
D49	Hanauska Road Access	T143N, R25W, Sec 27, SENE - FR2082A	Request for Special Use Road permit to access private land.	Scoping done winter 2003	Analysis in progress	August 2004	Jane Munnell 218-246-2123
D50	Benham Road Access	T148N, R26W, Sec 23 SWNW	Request for Special Use Road permit to access private land.	Scoping done winter 2003	Analysis in progress	August 2004	Jane Munnell 218-246-2123
D51	Mississippi Vegetation Management Project	T144N R26W, T144N R27W, T145N R144N, & T145N R27W; the northwest portion of the Mississippi Watershed	Evaluates the management options related to vegetative, fuels, and roads management in the Mississippi River Watershed	Spring 2004	Analysis in progress	Winter 2005	Michael Jiménez (218) 246-2123
D29	Private Road Access to Bowstring Lake Property	T147N, R26W, Section 2, SWSW and Section 11, NWNW.	Applicant has requested special use permit for a ¾ mile road crossing NF lands to access private land	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	May 2004.	Gregg Alle (218) 832-3161
D42	Eagle Nest Road	Road extends from Hwy 46 to South Deer Lake Campground. T147N, R27W, Sections 14,15,21,22, &28.	Project will look at small realignments, reconstructing bridges and adding bituminous surface to Eagle Nest Road. Project will also encompass the rehabilitation of East and West Seelye Campgrounds adjacent to this road.	Scoping completed.	Analysis initiated in December 2002.	September 2004.	Mike Martin (218) 335-8633
D48 M55	Bridge Replacement and Bridge Rehab	Two Mile Creek T147 N R 26W Sec 30 Long Lake Creek T143N R25W Sec 3; Batson Lake Inlet T60 R26 Sec 26	Replace bridge. Rehab and repairs may include wing walls, rip rap, pile caps, and rail posts.	Scoping done in spring 2003	Analysis in progress	Summer 2004	Bill Yourd (218)-335-8672
D53 M57	Re-issuance of Various Lands Special Use Permits	District-wide	Evaluate the renewal of Special Use Permits near expiration. Permits are valid for 5 years.	Scoping completed	Analysis in progress	July 2004	Jane Munnell (218)-246-2123
D54	Steward Land Exchange	T147N R26W Sec 5 and T148N R26W Sec 27	Exchange of 40 acre parcel of NF land for a 40 ac tract of private land.	Spring 2004	Analysis in progress	December 2004	Michael Jiménez (218) 246
M56	Expansion of Marcell and McDonald Lake Gravel Pits	T59N R26W Sec 20 NWNE and T58N R27W Sec 35 NWNE	Project will evaluate proposed expansion of Marcell and McDonald Lake Gravel Pits.	Spring 2004	Analysis in progress	December 2004	Michael Jiménez (218) 246

Completed Decision Documents

Project Number	Project Name	Location	Description	Decision Approval Date	Appeal Due Date	Appeal Review Date	Contact Person
D41	Upper Bowstring Intergrated Resource Project (IRP)	Encompasses the Upper Bowstring Watershed including Spring, Jessie, Rice, Caribou, and Turtle Lakes.	Evaluates the management options related to vegetative, wildlife, & watershed management and restoration in the Upper Bowstring Watershed.	Decision Notice Signed March 10, 2004.	Legal notice published on March 11, 2004 in <i>Western Itasca Review</i>	June 2004	Michael Jimenez (218) 246-2123

Forest Plan Revision to Culminate in 2004

April 2004

Forest Plan revision on the Chippewa and Superior National Forests will continue into 2004. Since the end of the four-month comment period (September 11, 2003) for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and proposed Forest Plans, the planning team has completed coding over 1,200 printed pages of comments as part of a process called Content Analysis. The Forest Service uses this analysis method to systematically compile, categorize, and capture the full range of viewpoints, and concerns expressed in public comments.

This work is part of a joint analysis by the Chippewa and Superior National Forests that will result in two separate revised Forest Plans. The Final EIS, decision document, and final revised Forest Plans will be issued in 2004. The Forest Plans will guide management direction for the next ten to 15 years.

For more information:

Specific questions concerning revision may be directed to:

Duane Lula, Forest Planner, Superior National Forest (218) 626-4300

Brenda Halter-Glenn, Forest Planner, Chippewa National Forest (218) 335-8651

Kay Getting, Chippewa Public Affairs, (218) 335-8673

Kris Reichenbach, Superior Public Affairs, (218) 626-4300

Draft documents and other Forest Plan Revision information is available at:

www.fs.fed.us/r9/chippewa.

Large print available upon request.

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Individuals and organizations with legal, economic, or preservation interests may request to participate in consultation on the project's effects on historic properties.

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Cass Lake, MN 56633-8929